

# SOCIAL JUSTICE ROLES FOR LIBRARIES & LIBRARIANS

I've been asked to speak on more or less this topic which is another way of saying "Just talk about what you talk about normally" I could not be happier to be here.

# BRIDGING THE DIVIDE WHILE SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

I'm a librarian who is concerned with the digital divide, social and digital inclusion, and how these issues intersect with the larger world of politics. I work mainly as a technology educator and I do a lot of writing on technology and library topics.

# BRIDGING THE DIVIDE BY SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

In fact, this is a bit more what I meant to say. The act of being truthful and honest about libraries and their very unique roles in society, is what helps keep people included and involved.

[<librarian.net/talks/wla17>](http://librarian.net/talks/wla17)

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**JESSAMYN WEST**

you can find these slides, my notes, and links with more information to the things I am talking about at this address. And that's my name :)

And I want to say that even though the things in the US that are going on RIGHT NOW are horrible and difficult to deal with, this talk is more general than just "What to do right now about this terrible man" and I apologize for that in advance.



1. History
2. Theory  
& Ideas
3. Actions

When I originally built up this talk, just after the election, I was talking to canadian librarians. I've been watching Inspector Murdoch. For those of you who watch this show... it's a period piece mystery about Toronto at the turn of the last century, based on books by Maureen Jennings. Now in its 10th season. It's a cop procedural with a lady coroner who, in later seasons is joined by (click)

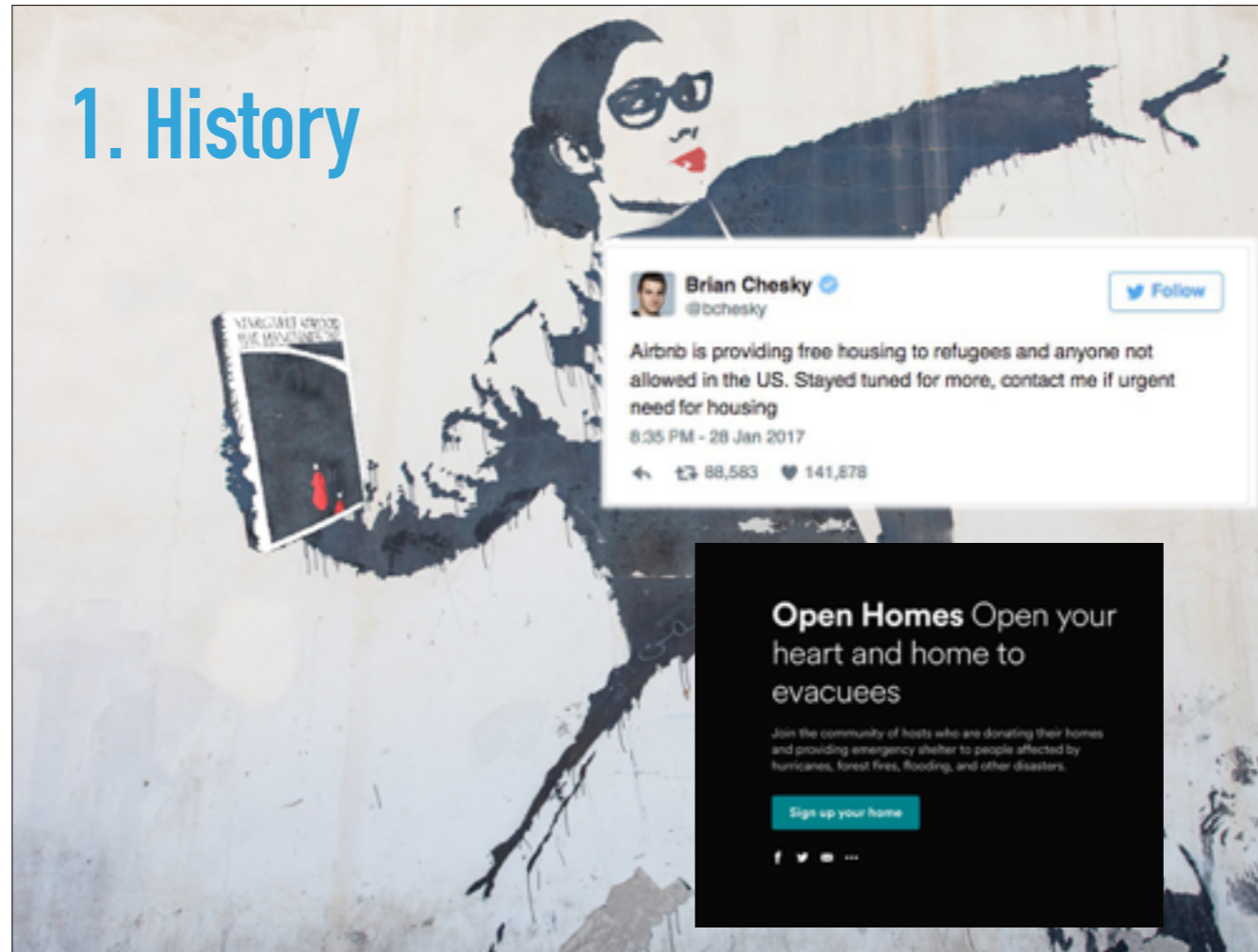


# 1. History 2. Theory & Ideas 3. Actions

...this character Rebecca James. Now, there were no lady coroners in 1890s Toronto and certainly no black lady coroners. But Yannick Bisson (the main guy) doesn't solve mysteries in real life either so while we're making up a world why don't we make up one that looks like what WE want in terms of diversity and inclusion? Representation matters. And it's clearly a problem for people. Earlier this year I worked with #1lib1ref adding cites to Wikipedia and I found, disturbingly, that even really boring tv show Wikipedia pages often have less information for the female characters and the PoC characters. This character wasn't even listed as STARRING in the show in the Wikipedia page. I fixed that. Wikipedians unfixed it. We muddle forward. This will be a theme moving forward.

I've got three chunks of stuff to talk about HISTORY, THEORY and then IDEAS, AND ACTIONS

# 1. History



It's been a really difficult set of months in the US. The good news is, it's a great time for organizing, woodshedding and finding ways to be useful. And we've been given an opportunity to help some people who are concerned, nervous and uncertain, as well as the same old people we've always been helping. For people in service professions the opportunity to serve more and to serve better, to step up in a time of crisis is a challenge we are good at rising to meet. We don't all have the reach of a tech company like AirBnB but we do have the ability to reach more people, more KINDS of people, through our actions.



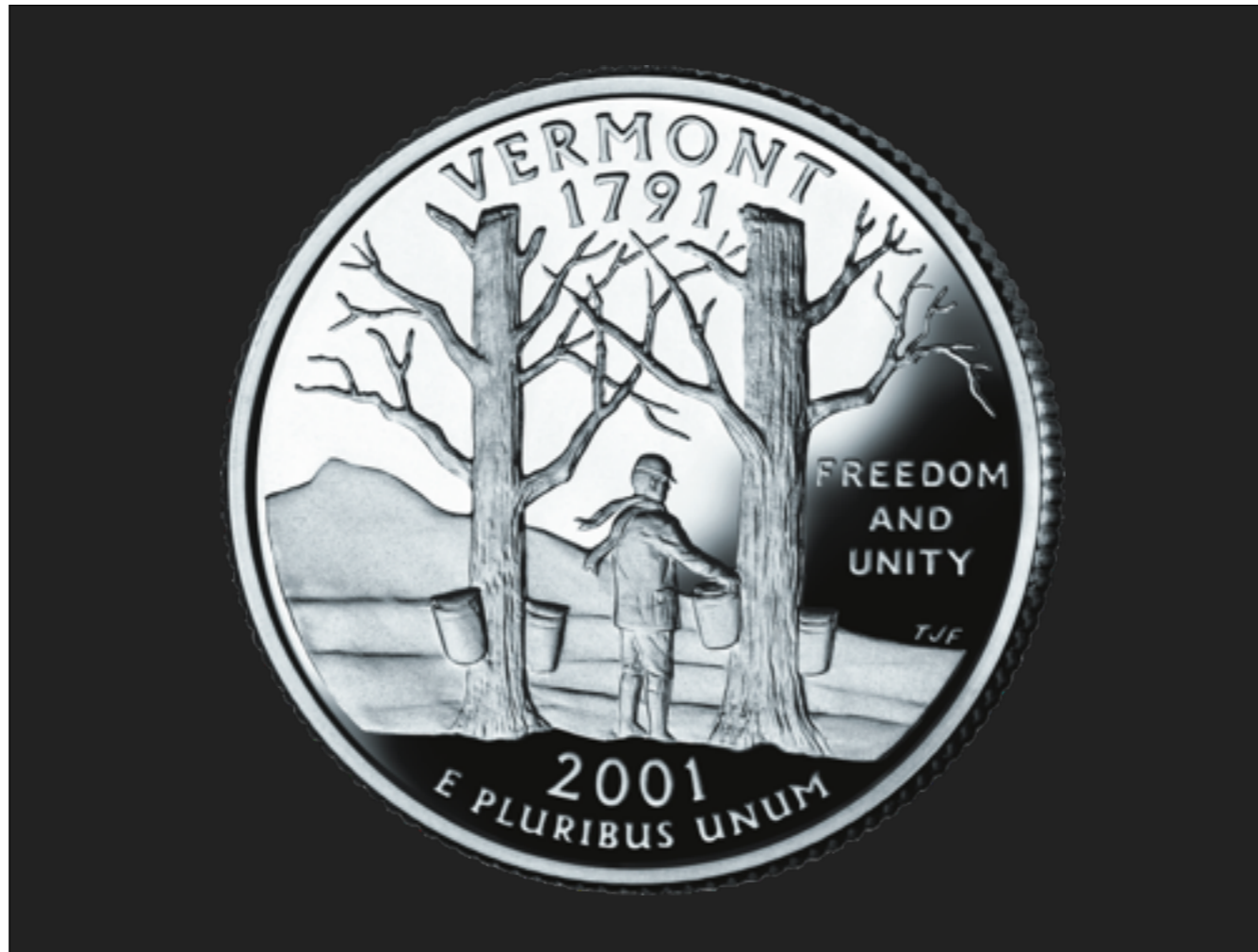
## WANTED: UNREASONABLE LIBRARIANS

**SRRT Newsletter #1  
May 1969**

I've been involved in library activism since I was in library school. Actually maybe before that. I went to an alternative college. I thought I wanted to go to law school because I wanted to help people. I decided I maybe didn't want a job that required me to dress up and get up early and I sort of fell into library school. Once I got there, I knew it was the place for me. A dedication to intellectual freedom, to the right to read for adults AND children, to diversity and inclusion, to access for people with disabilities, in prison, without homes, all of those were things I could get behind. And the dress code worked for me.

I joined SRRT (social responsibilities round table) of ALA when I was still in library school. This is a screenshot from their first newsletter (also linked on links page) along with the headline of one of the articles. I don't think I am an unreasonable person but I know that to some people demanding rights (or simply refusing the abridgment of rights) can seem... cheeky. And my response when people ask me "Why so political?" is just to say "I wasn't defending my rights before people started trying to take them away"





Sometimes people ask me what libraries have to do with politics.... I settled in Vermont (I am not from there) partly because I agreed with the politics of the place. I've been there for 20 years.

We had local elections recently as well as national elections. Vermont has a new Governor. He's fine. But one of his first acts was to accept the resignations of many people heading up his departments, including our state librarian. This is unusual. Usually people offer letters of resignation to an incoming administration which are politely dismissed.

I spoke to the president of the Vermont Library Association about what our response would be. She was concerned, saying "I don't really like this political stuff." I get that, or at least I mostly do. My personal feeling is that if there are enough of us to do the political mixing it up, it's fine if it's not for everyone. But I'd like to make an argument that there's at least some parts of this that could be for anyone. (we got a new state librarian a few months back, he is great)



And I think it's necessary to be at least a little political but maybe not in the way people think it's defined. I'll start with an anecdote and broaden it into some critical theory. This part is about technology, but it doesn't have to be. I teach basic technology classes at a local vocational high school. It's a few hours a week, drop-in, and free for anyone who wants to come in. The hardest to serve have always been the hardest to serve and we've tried to remove as many barriers as we can to people getting help.

This is Ed, one of my students. He is trying to make sense of facebook. Not because he suddenly wants to start "social networking" but because he met a woman who he would like to get to know better and that is the best, maybe only, way to communicate with her. Ed is struggling a little but we talked him through getting online, using Facebook Messaging and sending a message. He composed a message one week and came back to send it the next week. Ed doesn't have broadband or a computer at home.



**87% OF AMERICANS  
HAVE BROADBAND  
AT HOME**

**(mobile included)**

In fact, that's not THAT unusual. (more on the digital divide this afternoon) Ed also doesn't have a mobile phone. Many people don't. This can be challenging for them, signing up for websites that want to text you codes etc.



*Ed doesn't just need to understand technology, or technology's role in his world, he needs to understand technology's role in **THE** world*

So what does Ed need? He doesn't need a computer class. He needs his technological question contextualized. It's helpful to him to know WHY facebook operates the way it does, not just how it operates. This helps him understand how to respond.

*...from someone not trying  
to **sell** him something.*



(ever notice how all broadband ads look like this?) People need to be able to understand this "attention economy" from someone who is not actively involved in selling it to them. Me. You. Libraries.

**IN THE BANKING APPROACH,  
STUDENTS ARE "EMPTY" UNTIL  
DEPOSITS ARE MADE BY THE TEACHER**

**Paulo Freire**

## **2. Theory & Ideas**

The theoretical underpinning I use a lot is Paulo Freire. He was a Brazilian educator and philosopher and the person who founded the body of work known as Critical Pedagogy. Active from the 40s through the 90s. His best known work is *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, worth a read. He talked a lot about what is really happening when people learn. His argument is that issues of social justice and democracy itself are not distinct from acts of teaching and learning. And that there is no such thing as "neutral" education.

The model a lot of people like to use in traditional education is the "banking model" as mentioned here. \*waves\*

**THIS STIMULATES OPPRESSIVE  
ATTITUDES & PRACTICES EXISTING IN  
SOCIETY & INCREASES INEQUALITY**

**Paulo Freire**

His argument is that when you use the banking model, it just winds up reinforcing dominant models of ... everything. Strong ideas get stronger and aren't critically reflected on. The STRUCTURE of knowledge itself isn't reflected on. If your society has some ... problematic ideas, they just get passed along without regards to whether they're causing trouble, harming people, increasing oppression and inequality.



**"Be aware of  
ourselves as  
practitioners and as  
human beings . . . .  
to teach in a non-  
threatening, anti-  
discriminatory way."**

**bell hooks**

So, if the structure is actually part of what is causing the problem—and this is often true with social problems that have reached institutionalized levels like structural poverty and structural racism—then you don't just learn about them in a "Hey poverty is bad!" way. To really address issues like poverty and racism, you have to look at the structures that underlie them. You don't have to be like "ergo: THIS SUCKS" but you do need to commit to learning together. So your own role and context as an educator (librarians are educators) is part of this interaction. bell hooks is a critical theorist who writes well on this subject. Put another way, it's helpful and liberating for Ed to know why facebook is so hard for him.





So the operative word is praxis, the idea of "informed actions". Engaging, applying, exercising, realizing, or practicing ideas. In library terms this is more like ... how I learned it in library school was ISAR systems. Info storage and retrieval. You built a thing to do a job. Then you tested it to see if it was doing its job. Did it find the things it was supposed to find? Did it not find the things that it wasn't supposed to find? You evaluate how the thing worked critically not just "We were supposed to build a website. This is a website. Therefore we accomplished our goals"

(click) There are many people working on these sorts of topics in librarianship, a lot of their online discourse can be found via the #critlib hashtag, linked on the links page.



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MicHELL 🍁 Spookcault  
@christapeterso

Follow

## One Weird Trick to get nazi imagery off twitter

The screenshot shows a Twitter interface. On the left, a country selection menu is open, listing various countries. 'Germany' is selected with a blue checkmark. The main content area shows a tweet from the 'American Nazi Party' with a large swastika image. A notification banner at the top of the tweet area states: 'GANP14's account has been withheld in: Germany, France. Learn more'. Below the tweet, there are 'Trends for you' and a footer with copyright information for 2017 Twitter.

12:42 PM - 12 Oct 2017

This is more relevant than you might think because SO much of our "learning" nowadays is mediated by search engines, social media propagation, and information storage and retrieval systems.

Did you know you can get Nazis 100% off your twitter just by telling twitter you live in Germany?

Google are women evil

are women evil  
are women stronger than men  
are women equal to men

About 80,000,000 results (0.53 seconds)

Every woman has some degree of prostitute in her. Every woman has a little evil in her. ... Women don't love men, they love what they can do for them. It is within reason to say women feel attraction, but they cannot love men. 25 Jun 2015

[Are women evil - Shedding of the Ego](http://sheddingoftheego.com/2015/06/25/are-women-evil/)  
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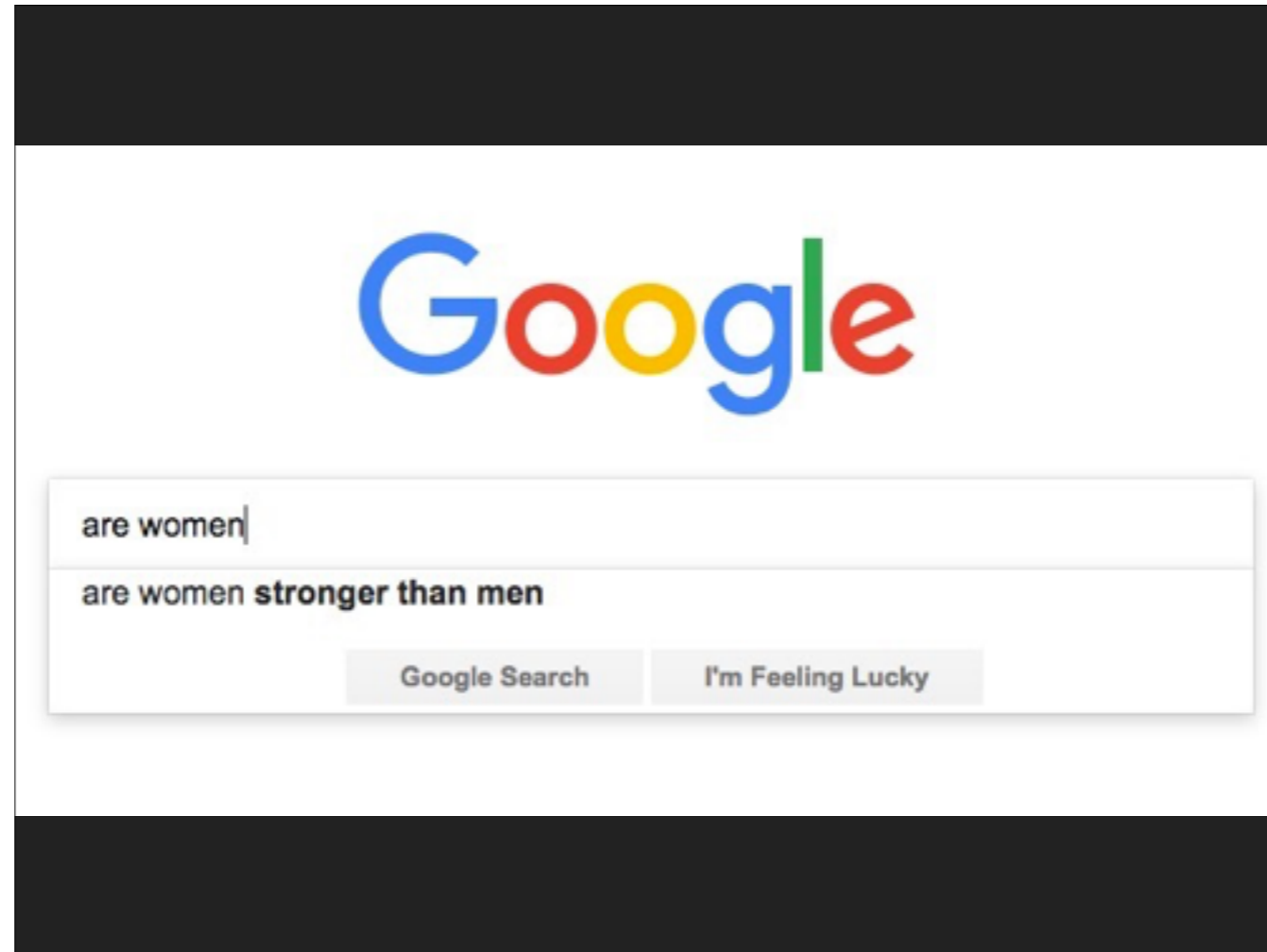
About this result • Feedback

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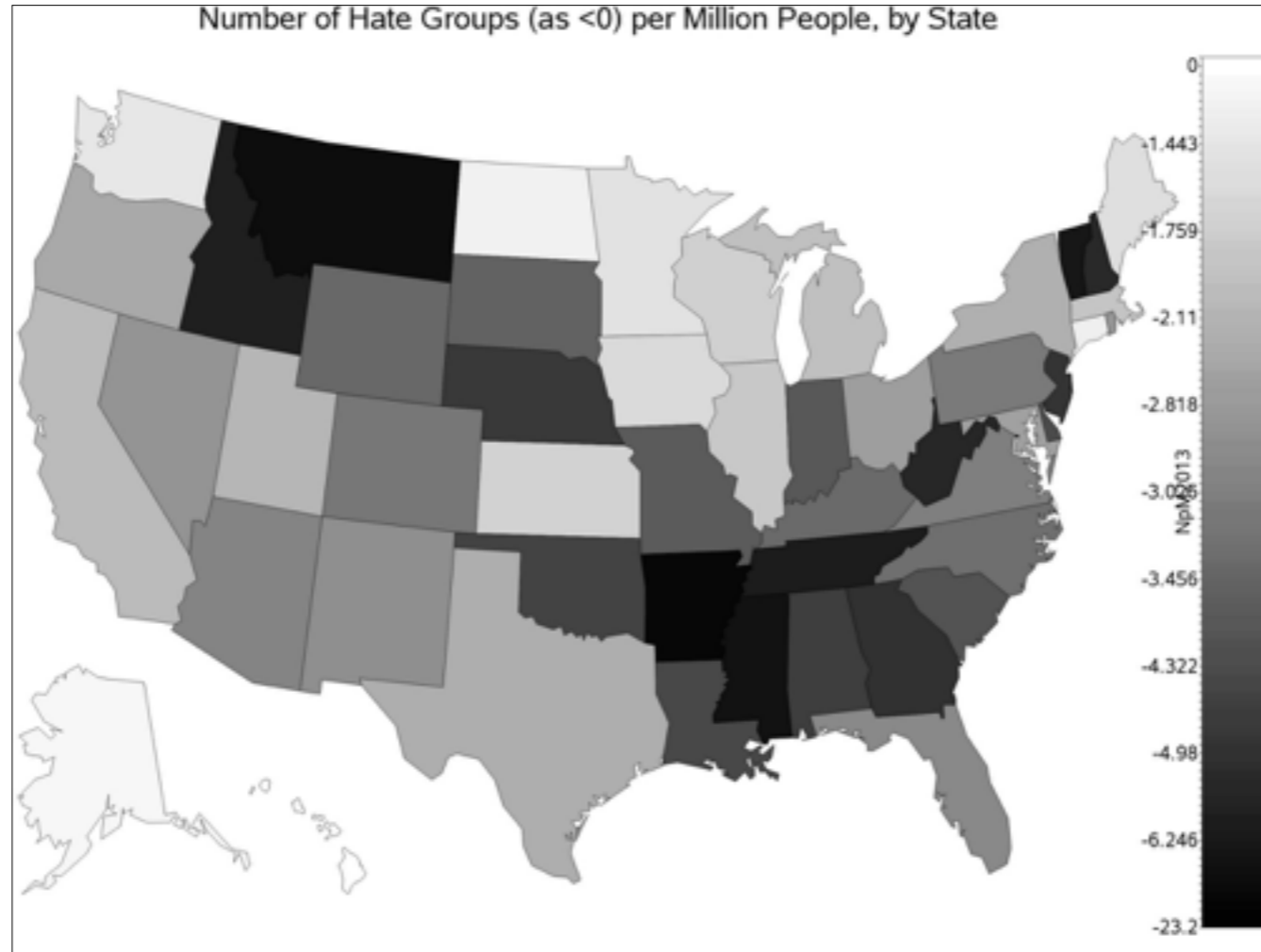
[I will explain how ALL women are evil - Bodybuilding.com Forums](http://forum.bodybuilding.com)  
forum.bodybuilding.com > More General Categories > Misc. ▾  
4 Oct 2013 - 30 posts - 21 authors  
In that they're only there until somebody comes and takes them from you or for as long as you have the resources to keep them. A woman ...

[Why are women so evil? im done with it? - Dating](http://www.datehookup.com/thread-1390705.htm)  
www.datehookup.com/thread-1390705.htm ▾  
16 Dec 2014 - 60 posts - 10 authors  
I have discovered something that has been known for centuries, women are evil creatures at the core.Does that sound strange coming from me ...

Here's another search engine based recent gaffe that google has since (click) fixed. And by fixing it they let us know something very important: that these things CAN be fixed. And this isn't just idle search engine goofery, these things have repercussions in the real world



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The southern Poverty Law Center was founded in 1971 so it's about as old as I am. They are known in the US as the group that bankrupted the Klan. They keep track of hate groups (Vermont is not doing so well, we've got an active secessionist group who are also racists). One of the things I like about them is that they also place a huge priority on education, to help people learn to not be terrible. They have a whole website [Tolerance.org](http://Tolerance.org) committed to educating children about tolerance but also more complex topics like white privilege, anti-racism, ableism and GLBT rights.



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They came out with a video recently (6 min long, it's linked in the resources) talking about Dylann Roof the man who murdered nine people in a black church in South Carolina. He used Google to get information on "black on white crime" which, I can tell you right now, isn't a thing. I mean it happens, but white people get killed by white people more often. Google sent him to white supremacist sites which were using effective SEO (search engine optimization) to reach the top of the results and they offered him "fake news" and bad information that led him to believe that not only was there a lot of black on white crime, but it was going unreported! A library wouldn't do that. It wouldn't even have a White Supremacist section. So when people ask "Why libraries in times of Google?" this is my new go-to story.





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# WE LEARN TOGETHER

In summary learning is a thing that takes place between people, not simply material that is passed from one person to another unchanged. A librarian is a part of that learning conversation.



**UNLEARNING  
LEARNING  
RELEARNING  
REFLECTION  
EVALUATION**

and we learn iteratively. We unlearn old ideas and relearn new ones.



# THEORY APPLICATION REFLECTION EVALUATION THEORY

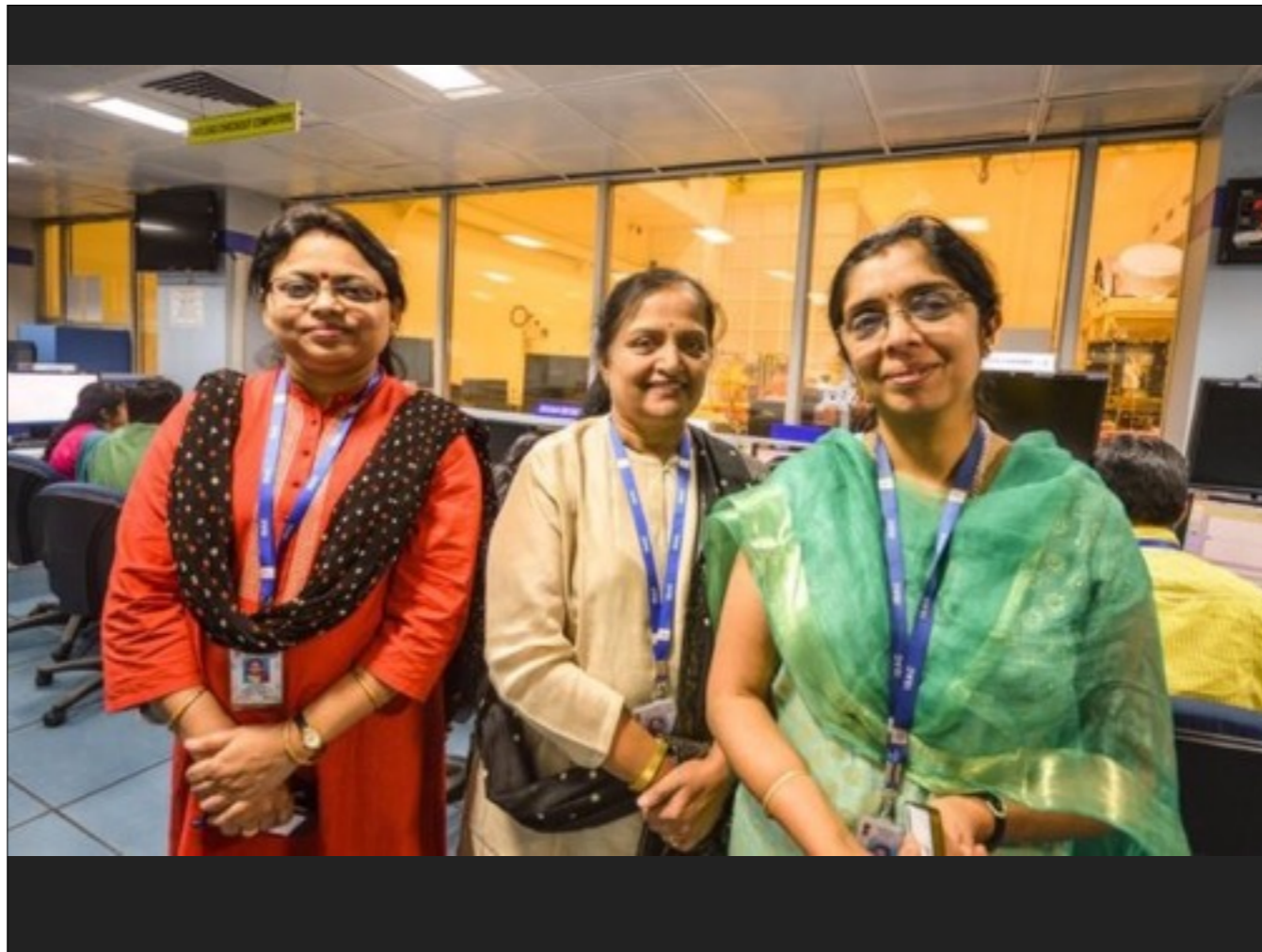
I had used the earlier slide in another, previous, shorter talk. As I went over my slides for this talk I asked myself "Why this white lady over and over?" I mean, I'm a white lady and something about that seemed "natural" to me. But that's something \*I\* need to unlearn, not something I should make everyone else deal with. This is Kalpana Chawla. She was an astronaut, a victim in the Columbia disaster. Representation matters.



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though I should qualify that to say that *accurate* representation matters. I went to find "that photo of the Indian female scientists" that I had seen when India launched their mission to Mars in September 2014. I vaguely remembered this photo, sent around as "scientists rejoice!" Turns out, and with no disrespect, those women are administrative staff for the Mars Mission. (click) THESE woman are (some of) the scientists. Great articles on the links page. But a large portion of the world got the right story but the wrong images. And this is how casual stereotyping can continue to fester, even by well-meaning people (and I should add, not everyone is so well-meaning, nor should we always care)



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And it's a constant process. You're never done. You change. The world changes. Technology changes. Having the right approach generally is part of it. But being open to getting better is also part of it. Which is hard because it means appreciating that we're not there yet, may never be there, and other people are also not there. Everyone has to make their own decisions about the trickier parts of social awareness, social justice and social activism (Nazi punching, yes or no? Nazis in the library, yes or no?) and part of avoiding burnout is understanding just how much you can control. And how much you can't.

## 3. Actions



SOCIAL JUSTICE?

**INCLUSION,  
DIVERSITY, RESPECT**

So my response to people asking why I am making things political is often just to restate that I am just trying to help people achieve equity which is not the same as equality. Equality always implies that we are all starting from the same place, so it's fine if we have, from today forward, equal opportunities. This ignores a great deal of history. But the awkward part is that sometimes getting at this equity can mean rebalancing things from where they are now. Doing this in response to social issues is considered social justice. OK then.

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# Do I belong?

your potential library patron

As I said before, representation matters. Libraries are, nominally for everyone, but does everyone feel included, does everyone feel like the library is the place for them? My public library specialty is outreach. Basically (at least partly) figuring out who is in your community, subtracting everyone who is coming in to the library and figuring out if there is anything you can do about the ones who don't come in. Maybe not... but probably there are things you can be doing. In my town, it's the men who don't come to the library. Their wives have cards, their kids have cards, but they don't. I've been puzzling over that. I'm not going to say it's not tricky...

---

**Is there going to  
be trouble there?**

**your library patron**

but one of the most important baseline things that helps people feel included is safety. Safety from harassment first, safety from judgement second.



And in some cases, the world as many people understand it has changed. And this is an opportunity to say "we recognize everyone and want them to be included." and you can try things, work them out, maybe one set of signs doesn't work because it's too cutesy (who is that person?), or too vague (is there a urinal?) and maybe it takes you a while to settle on one option.

...and this isn't just "yay progressives" People may have religious reasons to feel a men-only or women-only bathroom is appropriate, so keeping those options is \*also\* a way of supporting diversity.



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ITERATE  
**IN PUBLIC**  
**(IF POSSIBLE)**

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It's important to recognize our power in this. The library doing this is not just another business, it's a representation of people's public efforts and contributions (this pic is from the White House by the way) and when people see THE LIBRARY doing it, it becomes a more normal thing to do. We help set norms by doing things. We help set positive and inclusive norms by doing things in a positive and inclusive way.





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# Everyone is Different. So, What is Normal?

<b>Jill 5'7"</b> 125 lbs, 16 years	<b>Taylor 5'8"</b> 172 lbs, 16 years	<b>Timira 5'3"</b> 139 lbs, 16 years	<b>Tyler 5'0"</b> 97 lbs, 13 years	<b>Jose 5'6"</b> 125 lbs, 16 years	<b>Kaley 6'1"</b> 190 lbs, 17 years	<b>Tanner 5'3"</b> 134 lbs, 13 years
For as long as I can remember, I've been into martial arts, reading and basketball. Yogurt for a snack gives me energy to keep going. My favorite foods are pasta and stir-fry.	Look for me in the weight room, on the football field, or waterboarding. I like to cook for my friends or with my dad. I'll eat just about any type of food, as long as it tastes good.	I don't like to exercise, but I love dancing and playing games outside with my friends. I also enjoy singing, writing, and art projects. For food, my picks are salads, fruits, crackers and beef jerky.	I play lots of soccer and run track. Reading and playing the trumpet are other things I like to do for fun. I eat all the food! Cheeseburgers and spaghetti are my favorites.	Soccer is my sport. I also play basketball, ride my bike and hang out with friends when I'm not watching my little brother. My favorite food? My mom's tamales are the best.	I play the saxophone, and like watching movies. For fun, I'll basketball and like riding. I like fresh vegetables and Asian foods, but I love chocolate ice cream!	Bike riding and walking to my friends house keep me moving most of the time. My favorite thing to do? Play video games! Chips and salsa are at the top of my favorite foods list.

And I use the word normal carefully. Because there are lots of ways to be normal, most people are normal. Even weird people are normal. But normative, settings norms for how we treat each other, figuring out guidelines so that we can all share space, share society, that's a larger social job. This is from a Dairy Council poster by the way. You know what is NOT normal? Orange cheese.

### **B.1.1 Core Values of Librarianship (Old Number 40.1)**

The foundation of modern librarianship rests on an essential set of core values which define, inform, and guide all professional practice. These values reflect the history and ongoing development of the profession and have been advanced, expanded, and refined by numerous policy statements of the American Library Association. Among these are:

- Access
- Confidentiality/Privacy
- Democracy
- Diversity
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Preservation
- The Public Good
- Professionalism
- Service
- Social Responsibility

This is why libraries have so many policies! And the good news about this social justice stuff is that the guiding principles of our library organizations state right up front that this is what we are about.

This is the ALA Code of Ethics (June 1976) but you knew that.

### B.3. Diversity (Old Number 60)

The American Library Association (ALA) promotes equal access to information for all persons and recognizes the ongoing need to increase awareness of and responsiveness to the diversity of the communities we serve. ALA recognizes the critical need for access to library and information resources, services, and technologies by all people, especially those who may experience language or literacy-related barriers; economic distress; cultural or social isolation; physical or attitudinal barriers; racism; discrimination on the basis of appearance, ethnicity, immigrant status, religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression; or barriers to equal education, employment, and housing.

Libraries can and should play a crucial role in empowering diverse populations for full participation in a democratic society. In order to accomplish this, however, libraries must utilize multivariate resources and strategies. In the library workforce, concrete programs of recruitment, training, development, advancement and promotion are needed in order to increase and retain diverse library personnel who are reflective of the society we serve. Within the American Library Association and in the services and operations of libraries, efforts to include diversity in programs, activities, services, professional literature, products and continuing education must be ongoing and encouraged.

Here are a few more examples. Again I presume you know these things but it's never a bad idea to get a refresher. Quoting policy is useful and has tactical usefulness. We are people who care about these things: diversity, combatting racism, protecting people against government intimidation. (ALA Policy Manual Section B: Positions and Public Policy Statements)

Put another way being antiracist is our job. Part of it.

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participation in a  
multivariate res  
recruitment, tra  
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the American Lib  
include diversity  
continuing educ

### **B.3.2 Combating Racism (Old Number 60.2)**

Since 1936, the American Library Association has been actively engaged in combating any and all attitudes, behavior, services or programs which amount to the exclusion or restriction of a targeted group of people based on a designation of race, skin color, ethnic origin or descent.

ALA also recognizes that institutionalized inequities based on race are embedded into our society and are reinforced through social institutions and further perpetuated by policies, practices, behaviors, traditions, and structures. And, since libraries are a microcosm of the larger society and play an important and unique role in the communities they serve, they must seek to provide an environment free of racism, where all are treated with respect and dignity.

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### **B.3. Diversity (Old Number 60)**

The American Library Association (ALA) promotes equal access to information for all persons and recognizes the ongoing need to increase awareness of and responsiveness to the diversity of the communities we serve. ALA recognizes the critical need for access to library and information resources, services, and technologies by all people, especially those who may experience language or literacy-related barriers; economic distress; cultural or social isolation; physical or attitudinal barriers; racism; discrimination on the basis of appearance, ethnicity, immigrant status, religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression; or barriers to equal education, employment, and housing.

Libraries can and should play a crucial role in empowering diverse populations for full

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### **B.3.2 Combating Racism (Old Number 60.2)**

Since 1936, the American Library Association has been actively engaged in combating any and all attitudes, behavior, services or programs which amount to the exclusion or restriction of a targeted group of people based on a designation of race, skin color, ethnic origin or descent.

ALA also recognizes that institutionalized inequities based on race are embedded into our society and are reinforced through social institutions and further perpetuated by policies, practices, behaviors, traditions, and structures. And, since libraries are a microcosm of the larger society and play an important and unique role in the communities they serve, they must

### **B.2.4 Governmental Intimidation (Old Number 53.4)**

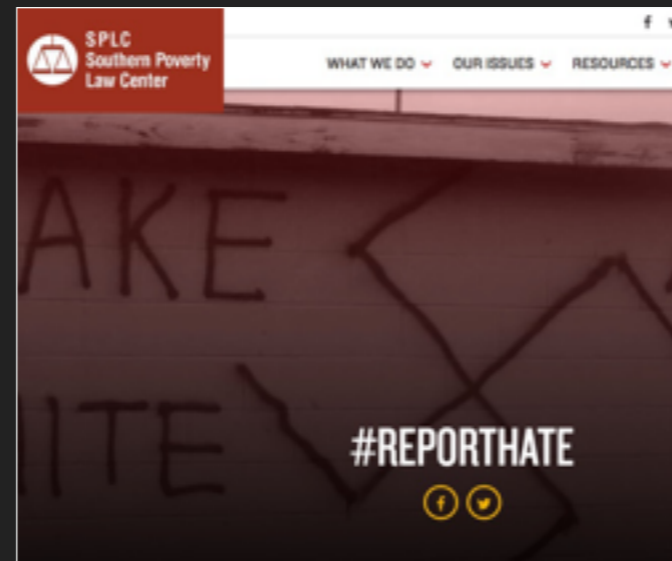
The American Library Association opposes any use of governmental prerogatives that lead to the intimidation of individuals or groups and discourages them from exercising the right of free expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. ALA encourages resistance to such abuse of governmental power and supports those against whom such governmental power has been employed.

Here are a few more examples. Again I presume you know these things but it's never a bad idea to get a refresher. Quoting policy is useful and has tactical usefulness. We are people who care about these things: diversity, combatting racism, protecting people against government intimidation. (ALA Policy Manual Section B: Positions and Public Policy Statements)

Put another way being antiracist is our job. Part of it.

## HELP ORGANIZATIONS WHO HELP

### ▶ Report hate (SPLC)

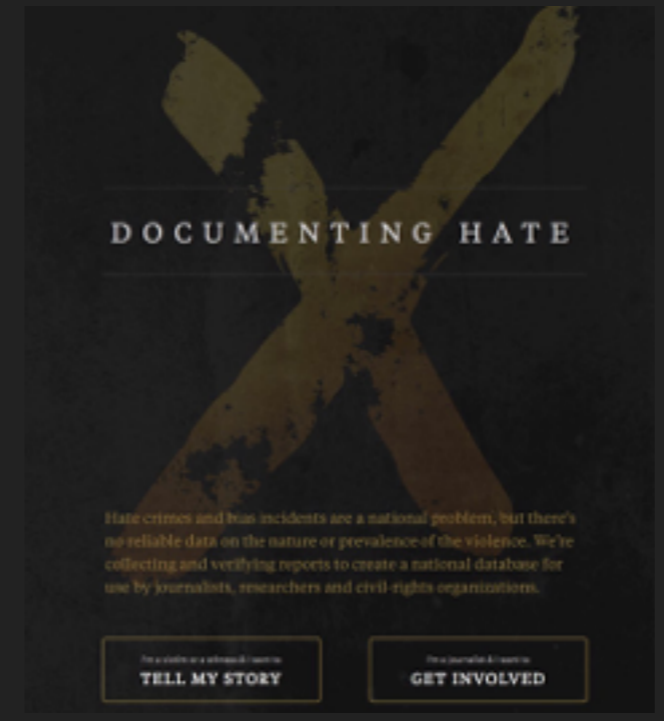


So I've got a few lists coming up here. Links are on the web site, for example things libraries can actually DO. First set is about knowing tools to help people with inclusion and diversity ... friction points. Problems. Know the resources which are out there. You don't have to build everything yourself.

SPLC - southern poverty law center

## HELP ORGANIZATIONS WHO HELP

- ▶ Report hate (SPLC)
- ▶ Help people talk about hate crimes (ProPublica)



ProPublica is a non-profit journalism group who counts the things that others can't or won't. They have a website for reporting hate crimes. They've just partnered with Vermont Digger for reporting hate crimes in Vermont. This helps Vermonters feel like it;s for them.



## HELP ORGANIZATIONS WHO HELP

- ▶ Report hate (SPLC)
- ▶ Help people talk about hate crimes (ProPublica)
- ▶ Report censorship (ALA)



Within your libraries, report challenges to materials and programs. How do you guys do this here? Within your regional associations?

## HELP ORGANIZATIONS WHO HELP

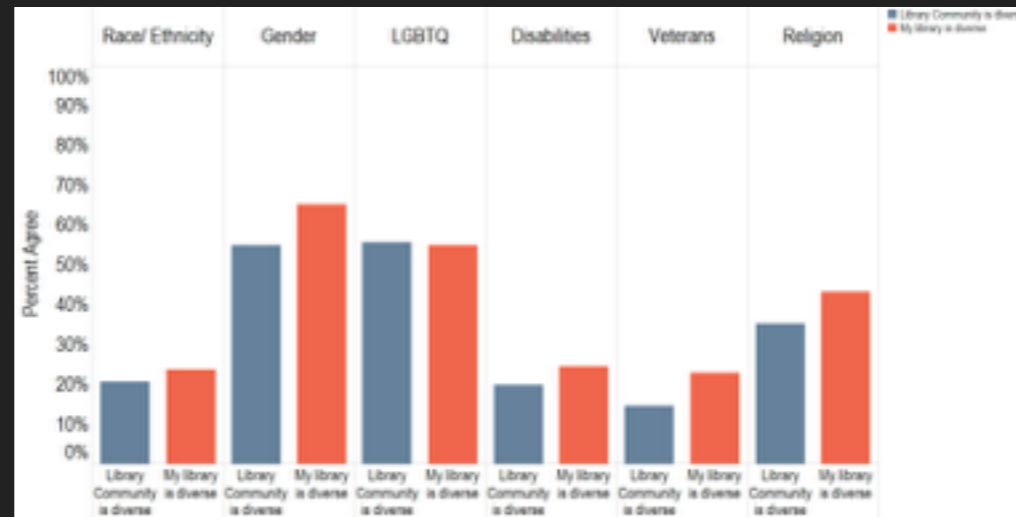
- ▶ Report hate (SPLC)
- ▶ Help people talk about hate crimes (ProPublica)
- ▶ Report censorship (ALA)
- ▶ Report police misconduct (CATO)



And report on the people who are supposed to be helping but don't always help. The CATO institute is a libertarian think tank in the US who is tracking police misconduct and compiles a weekly report.

## EFFECTIVELY REPRESENT THE WORLD, AND YOUR DREAM WORLD

- ▶ Create, support, and maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce.



As I repeat over and over, representation matters. Look around at your workplace and see if it reflects the population you serve and ask yourself "why not?" if it doesn't and see if you can do something about it. This study (in the links) is interesting. Library directors were asked about the diversity of "the library community" and their library specifically. Of course all libraries are above average.



There are many reasons why this sort of thing is important but the biggest one is that diversity makes us smarter. This seems obvious, but isn't always. And when you're serving the entire public, it's important to know things like "No, you don't necessarily shake a woman's hand if she's Muslim" as well as more complex things like "Gee everyone using your software isn't going to have the same perfect vision and lack of shaky hands as you do when you're 30" (the average age of employees at Google, Facebook, Microsoft)

## EFFECTIVELY REPRESENT THE WORLD, AND YOUR DREAM WORLD

- ▶ Create, support, and maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- ▶ Understand when you are coming from a position of power and use that power graciously & for good.

We often don't feel like we are powerful, in libraries, but to the people who use our services, we are the ones in charge, the ones who can levy fines, give out computer time, track down an item, explain a confusing tech interaction. Every time we have a patron interaction that shows grace, that shows that we are human too, we help people feel included, that the library is theirs.



This is one of my favorite photos of the Obama administration. Seeing a person in a position of power saying they are like you (and showing you) has value.

“I want to know if my hair is just like yours,” Jacob Philadelphia told Mr. Obama...

## EFFECTIVELY REPRESENT THE WORLD, AND YOUR DREAM WORLD

- ▶ Create, support, and maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- ▶ Understand when you are coming from a position of power and use that power graciously & for good.
- ▶ **If you have privilege, don't waste it.**

One of the most difficult parts of all of this is learning about privilege. And the way different kinds of privilege intersect. You may be privileged in one way and not on another. I'm White. I'm Jewish. I'm short. I'm female. I'm in front of this room.

Many people, especially people who haven't really spent a lot of time learning about social justice issues, may not be aware of the privilege they have and so they can't use their power for good because they don't feel that they have it (or worse, feel antagonized by others' accomplishments). Learn about what privilege is. Learn to talk to other people about it.

## THE WORDS WE USE MATTER

### ► Beware of unconscious biases

<b>Skin-tone IAT</b>	<i>Skin-tone</i> ('Light Skin - Dark Skin' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize light and dark-skinned faces. It often reveals an automatic preference for light-skin relative to dark-skin.
<b>Gender-Science IAT</b>	<i>Gender - Science</i> . This IAT often reveals a relative link between liberal arts and females and between science and males.
<b>Sexuality IAT</b>	<i>Sexuality</i> ('Gay - Straight' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish words and symbols representing gay and straight people. It often reveals an automatic preference for straight relative to gay people.
<b>Presidents IAT</b>	<i>Presidents</i> ('Presidential Popularity' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize photos of Barack Obama and one or more previous presidents.
<b>Native IAT</b>	<i>Native American</i> ('Native - White American' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Native American faces in either classic or modern dress, and the names of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.
<b>Weight IAT</b>	<i>Weight</i> ('Fat - Thin' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of people who are obese and people who are thin. It often reveals an automatic preference for thin people relative to fat people.

And while we're talking about talking, let's really dig in to how we talk. There is science that shows that people hold a lot of unconscious biases. Stuff that you get from sort of society's background radiation. You can take a number of implicit bias tests to check yourself.



## THE WORDS WE USE MATTER

- ▶ Beware of unconscious biases
- ▶ Understand microaggressions



Once you realize that these biases exist you can take efforts to not have them creep into your language. There's a lot of casual language people toss around without meaning to hurt but it has the effect of "othering"

## THE WORDS WE USE MATTER

- ▶ Beware of unconscious biases
- ▶ Understand microaggressions
- ▶ Stay up-to-date on terminology



Being conscious about your language generally is a good thing to do and something I could do better at. I suggest this newsletter about conscious language (linked on the page) Now being mindful doesn't mean you need to make every language change someone says you should (you hear a LOT of blowback against the idea of "language policing") but that you should think about whether what you're saying is having the desired effect. Speaker intention and listener interaction don't always line up.

## THE WORDS WE USE MATTER

- ▶ Beware of unconscious biases
- ▶ Understand microaggressions
- ▶ Stay up-to-date on terminology
- ▶ Know that you will make mistakes
- ▶ **Help others do the same**

Be forgiving to yourself when you make mistakes and help others learn at the same time.

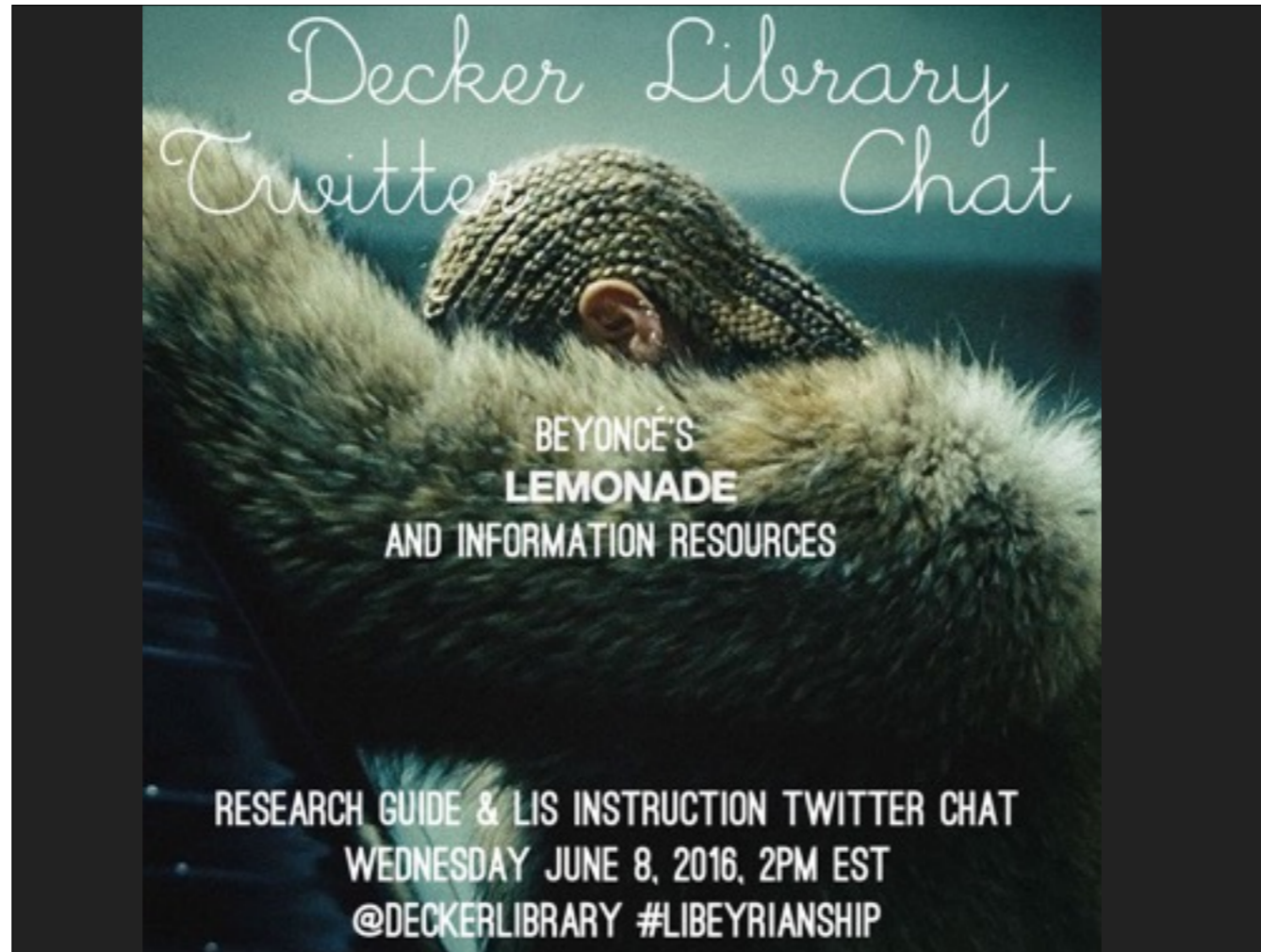
## CREATE RESOURCES AND SURFACE HIDDEN INFORMATION

- ▶ Collate and annotate

But most importantly (and finally) USE THE SKILLS YOU HAVE. We don't have to become different sorts of people just because we're trying to be socially conscious. We just can turn that on to different projects. Highlight different voices.



This is an example I love. When Beyonce's lemonade came out (click) this librarian made this excellent LibGuide about the themes and related stuff within it. Good stuff.



This is an example I love. When Beyonce's lemonade came out (click) this librarian made this excellent LibGuide about the themes and related stuff within it. Good stuff.

#LibrariesResist Resource List

## #LibrariesResist Resource List

Building a curated list of resources for libraries and library workers in the resistance. Because if Park Rangers can do it, so can we. Work in progress.

Shortlink: [bit.ly/LibrariesResist](https://bit.ly/LibrariesResist)

Twitter: [@LibrariesResist](https://twitter.com/LibrariesResist)

Facebook: [@LibrariesResist](https://facebook.com/LibrariesResist)

### Contents:

[Introduction](#)

[Other Resource/Reading Lists, Syllabi, etc.](#)

[Calls to Action](#)

[Privacy, Surveillance, Security](#)

[Free Speech, Protests, Demonstrations](#)

[Fake News, Propaganda, Fact Checking, Media Literacy](#)

[Civil and Human Rights](#)

[Government Contacts and Petitions](#)

[Government Affairs and Advocacy](#)

[Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Libraries](#)

[Preserving Vulnerable Data](#)

[Archiving Resistance History](#)

More recently there is this. Not only does this document have links to great information but it's a good outline of just what the topics are that need attention

## CREATE RESOURCES AND SURFACE HIDDEN INFORMATION

- ▶ Collate and annotate.
- ▶ Create resources and give them away.

The British Library Puts  
1,000,000 Images into the  
Public Domain, Making  
Them Free to Reuse &  
Remix

Not only can we make things: we have the ability to give the things away that we make. Put free or Creative Commons licensing on things. Scan and share.





The Vermont Library Association went to VT ComicCon and had a table. We had a coloring area. We handed out coloring sheets that were made by another librarian I knew from facebook who had drawn these and just given them away freely (link on sheet) with female superheroes including female superheroes of color. Representation matters.

## CREATE RESOURCES AND SURFACE HIDDEN INFORMATION

- ▶ Collate and annotate.
- ▶ Create resources and give them away.
- ▶ Create partnerships with other communities (online and offline) to strengthen each other.

And you don't have to do it all. Sometimes just lending your voice, your authoritative voice to others who are doing useful projects can go a long way.

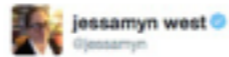


## Wikipedia #1lib1ref

January 15 through February 3, 2017

*Imagine a World where Every Librarian  
Added One More Reference to Wikipedia*

The **Wikipedia Library** is hosting the #1Lib1Ref campaign. The object is to get every librarian to add one reference or citation to a Wikipedia article.



Who was this black woman working  
@librarycongress in the 40s? Jewell Mazique!  
No Wikipedia article, so I wrote one.  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewell\\_Ma...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewell_Ma...)



I found an interesting photo of a woman I didn't recognize doing library things and I made a wikipedia page about her.

# Jewell Mazique

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia  
(Redirected from [Jewel Mazique](#))

**Jewell R. Mazique** (d. September 18, 2007) was an activist who helped found the Capital Transit campaign with [United Federal Workers](#) to integrate Washington D.C.'s bus operators.<sup>[1] [2]</sup> Mazique wrote extensively for *The Washington Afro-American* newspaper on topics such as the [United Nations](#) position on African Nations, and how black children were being educated in DC schools.<sup>[3]:99</sup> She served on the National Council for the [Southern Negro Youth Congress](#) in 1945, a group claimed to be a Communist front organization.<sup>[4]</sup>

She was the subject of a U.S. Government [Office Of War Information](#) documentary photo series in 1942 while she was a clerk at the [Library of Congress](#).<sup>[5]</sup> The photos, taken by John Collier, were supposedly depicting a day in the life of a typical black Washingtonian but critics argued the photos were "less picturesque and less a credit to freedom's national seat" than a typical day of an average black woman in Washington D.C.<sup>[6]</sup>

**Jewell Mazique**



Jewell Mazique waiting for a streetcar on her way home from work.

<b>Born</b>	Jewell Crawford
<b>Died</b>	September 18, 2007 Washington D.C.

I found an interesting photo of a woman I didn't recognize doing library things and I made a wikipedia page about her.

## CREATE RESOURCES AND SURFACE HIDDEN INFORMATION

- ▶ Collate and annotate.
- ▶ Create resources and give them away.
- ▶ Create partnerships with other communities (online and offline) to strengthen each other.
- ▶ Don't forget to mention: **librarians did this**

But always at least mention, "hey we're the librarians" the good deeds you do promote the entire profession. And even though I think we're pretty cool, we can always use more help with the image thing.



# 2011

Because even though I look at these signs and say "What? Librarians have ALWAYS been out in front of social issues..." that's not how people see us so much. Which means we have more room to move, pushing the envelope, before we're maybe starting to get "out there" this is a good thing.



2017

Because even though I look at these signs and say "What? Librarians have ALWAYS been out in front of social issues..." that's not how people see us so much. Which means we have more room to move, pushing the envelope, before we're maybe starting to get "out there" this is a good thing.



**BECAUSE THE  
EXPERT IN THE  
LIBRARY IS YOU.**

**BECAUSE  
LIBRARIANS  
KNOW  
INFORMATION IS  
THE BEST  
MEDICINE FOR  
HEALTHCARE  
QUESTIONS.**

**BECAUSE THE BEST  
SEARCH ENGINE  
IN THE LIBRARY IS  
THE LIBRARIAN.**

**BECAUSE  
LIBRARIANS GET  
AN A+ FOR  
ENSURING KIDS  
EXCEL IN  
READING.**

**BECAUSE FAKE  
NEWS CAN HAVE  
REAL-WORLD  
CONSEQUENCES.**

**BECAUSE A  
LIBRARY CARD IS  
THE MOST  
IMPORTANT  
SCHOOL SUPPLY  
OF ALL.**

Because we know, that libraries have transformative properties but we can always use the PR





**LEARNING IS A  
PLACE WHERE  
PARADISE CAN BE  
CREATED.**

This is another bell hooks quotation.



**THE LIBRARY IS  
THE CLASSROOM  
WHERE WE  
LEARN TO BE  
HUMAN.**

And this one is mine. The learning that people do at libraries is what helps them to be people.



HUMAN  
CITIZENS  
PARENTS  
NEIGHBORS  
COWORKERS  
FRIENDS  
PEOPLE

and being people together helps us be a better society.

*Thank you!*

[<librarian.net/talks/wla17>](http://librarian.net/talks/wla17)

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**JESSAMYN WEST**

thanks very much for your kind attention. More digital divide talk from me later this afternoon.